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THE HOUSE OF EDUCATION
AMBLESIDE

May 1911

Dear Madam,

In view of the efforts Head Mistresses are making to indicate suitable careers to their girls on leaving, perhaps some information about this Secondary Training College may be of use.

I enclose the Prospectus of the House of Education, but you may like to know further, the qualifications which are desirable in a candidate for admission and the prospects of a Student when her training at this College is finished.

A girl who is doing well in the Sixth Form (or even in the Upper Fifth) should be a suitable candidate, but she should be especially good in modern languages and music. Some knowledge of the piano is practically necessary, even if the candidate play the violin.

A Student's prospects when she has finished her training are, perhaps, unusually good: she is sure of an appointment before she leaves College, and should she require another post in the future, she writes to the Vice-Principal and is usually placed immediately. No Student trained here during the last 20 years has the anxiety of looking for work for herself, and the demand for our teachers is so much in excess of the supply (we receive only 40 Students) that we are glad to get applications for posts from old Students.

In the delightfulness of the work, the healthfulness of the life and

-2-

the pleasantness of the social atmosphere, I believe that the life of a trained Governess in a family compares very favourably with other occupations open to women. In the matter of remuneration, also, she is well off; a lady who receives, say, from £70 to £100 as a resident private teacher is better off than most Assistant Mistresses.

Private teachers trained at the House of Education teach their pupils on the lines of the Parents' Union School. I enclose a specimen syllabus for the highest class (girls from 15 - 18) to indicate the level of attainments necessary for a Secondary Governess.

I have ventured, Madam, to put the position of a Governess trained at the House of Education rather fully before you, partly because the information may be of use in advising girls (past and present pupils - we are always glad to have some older women in training), and also in the hope that you may bear our requirements in mind in preparing your girls for their vocation.

The Students recommended to us should be gentlewomen and of a good physique.

I am,

Sincerely yours,

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

Dear Sir

Thank you for the friendly notice of "the House of Education & its Work" in the September number of the School World, a notice of which I enjoyed the good-natured raillery as much as the kindly appreciation. I read somewhere the other day that any fool who ^{had} thought upon a subject for 20 years would have something new & worth hearing to say on that subject. With this saying by way of extenuation may I be bold enough to claim that in 50 years I have found out two or three ^{seriously unimportant} ~~trifling~~ things about the mind which make all the difference in the world to education. There is no credit of course in ^{chance upon} ~~finding or finding out~~ what is ~~to be discovered~~ there to be discovered, but is there not some discredit in going on as if no way had been ^{ascertained} ~~discovered~~ of making the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake delightful & engrossing to children?

I know that my professional colleagues are as devoted, even as recklessly devoted, as the men 'at the front', but why waste labour on educational spade-work when there are a few principles the realisation of which affords ^{as} ~~striking~~ results?

For example, The mistress of one primary school writes:-
"During the last twelve months we have had no less than 123 visitors." We had but one such primary school twelve months ago, now thirty-four are doing the work & many more are, I believe, about to begin. "Quite wonderful", "amazing", are the frequent comments of educational authorities on the children's oral & written work, & the children themselves are so engrossed that the presence of visitors does not seem to disturb them.

Yes, "the programme is so full that revision is impossible" and, "the examinations ~~(terminal)~~ are designed to

is. These
yielded by
the children through
in agriculture,
children must
say, a chapter of
the Pilgrim's Progress,
or of Cleeve's Expedition of
Copley reading,
with spirit & accuracy months later in the terminal examination.

(according to Brown as collection) etc. & are able to write upon what they have read with spirit & accuracy months later in the terminal examination.

give pupils an opportunity of telling what they know"; but then they have read & know hundreds of pages out of, say, a score of first rate books, & the questions cover any part of the term's reading in each book.

As for the very natural suggestion of "vain display", or a "pedagogic artifice", no answer occurs to me but a visit to some half-dozen schools in Bradford. I believe the spontaneousness of the children in these schools is very striking; failing this, we should be happy to send a few sets of examination answers & the three pamphlets issued for such purposes to any teachers who are seriously interested. There is an interesting ^{article} paper in the Nineteenth Century of April last, on "Courage in Education", describing a visit to one of these schools; ^{and another article}

It is, alas, true that my ~~view~~

"whole psychology runs counter to the current biological views"; it is a case of ~~one contra hundred~~ but are these current views satisfactory, does the drudgery of teachers & children produce adequate results in the 'general'? Of course there are clever children whom no one can hinder from learning, or keep from books, but how does the average or 'backward' child respond to his teacher's noble & devoted efforts?

This question brings me to what you, Sir, appear to regard as the crux of the situation.

"The personality of the teacher is, in fact, left out of count - surely a serious drawback to the whole idea." As a matter of fact, teachers who adopt this scheme claim that it is "new life" to them, but were it not so, we do not offer to ^{donna} a field for the exercise of personality, but rather, definite work in which personality

may play as it finds occasion; why, then, should teachers allow ^{to be called} cant about their "particular personality"? as a thing apart, a rare

The Organising Secretary P.N.E.U. Office 26 Victoria Street London.

by a Bradford
Schoolmaster
Healing with
Doubtless
on
He had not
worked in his
School, may
shortly appear
in the Town
Review.

any public function

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As a matter of fact, practical teachers do not ^{anxious} ~~anxious~~ ^{concern} themselves about what is no doubt a notice invented by the newspapers. On the other hand, teachers, with which is called ^{that to}

An engaging,
a personality,
or powerful
personality,
an aptitude
up to much
room, his
pupils are good
devoted, but
they have not
clear space for

plant for whose growth a school should offer favourable conditions

The choice of books is only a question of division of labour, when the children of each class read quickly a good many books. it rarely happens that the much occupied Head or Staff can give the necessary time to a selection of which every teacher knows the difficulty. Any teacher is, of course, at liberty to ~~both~~ ^{to both} ~~substitute his own favourite book~~ ^{to set his} own questions on it. As for the authoritative attitude, I suppose I must say ~~see~~ ^{see} ~~culpa~~, but then it is the authority belonging to a fact, not to a person: one does not say 'sugar is sweet' with diffidence.

For the questions quoted, the labour & cost of printing must excuse us for not inserting "Discuss ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~subject~~ ^{subject} (according to Lecky), etc. etc."

I wish the professional teachers of Secondary Schools would be induced to try a method which makes a liberal education possible under the usual ^{school} conditions, ^{probably with no change} ^{whatever in the timetable, as to the time allotted} ^{to each subject, what has been well called the} "modern humanities."

House of Education
Ambleside.

29. 9. 1917

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The more possible that people should subscribe for the programmes ^{to use} ^{as they think fit} ^{should it not be} ^{disadvantage} if a programme leading to reading of hundreds of pages in a long, 90. of books ^{spend} ^{fall into the hands of a teacher, however able, whose pupils} ^{are in the habit of preparing for an examination test by} ^{'fetting up' (we will not say cramming) the required matter?}